

The Early De Groot House
Grand Avenue
Ridgefield, Bergen County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

The De Groot House
1008 De Groot Avenue
Ridgefield, Bergen County, New Jersey

Owner: Maurice G. Gunn, address above

Date of Erection: 1801-1815

Architect: Unknown

Builder: John Edsall or John Day

Present Condition: Original, with modern additions

Number of Stories: One, with garret and cellar

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone
masonry

Exterior walls - coursed
ashlar stone masonry to
eaveline; frame gable ends
above; minor wings of
frame, shingled

Interior walls - lath and
plaster on studding

Chimneys - brick, built
into inside of gable end
walls

Roof - gambrel with modern
dormer windows inserted;
gable roof on minor wings;
modern asphalt shingle
roofing

Historical Data:

By a deed of 14 November 1753 John Christian,
Hendrick Banta, Arie DeGroot, Peter DeGroot, Michael
Vreelant, William Day, John Day, and Mary Edsall conveyed

te John Edsall the tract of land (on part of which stands the house here considered), in Bergen County, being his share of the entire tract acquired by the parties from Maria, widow of Jacob Gouveneur, of New York City, and others by deed of 2 July previous. It extended from Hudson River to Overpeck Creek.

John Edsall, the grantee above named, with wife Mary, being of Paterson, Essex County, gave a deed of 6 April 1801 to John Day of English Neighborhood (the present Borough of Ridgefield) Bergen County, conveying for \$625.00 a one-sixth part of "that house, land and meadow, beginning at Overpeck Creek", bounded southeast by land of Samuel Ellis, dec'd., southwest by that of Bogart, north by that of said John Day, and containing 80 acres.

This John Day of English Neighborhood by his will of 4 November, 1815, proved 5 September 1816 devised to his daughter Johanna (wife of John DeGroot) "all that farm I now live on", bounded south by John P. Demarest, southeast by Barney Decline, north by testator's other lands, and northwest by Overpeck Creek being 100 acres.

The devisee, Johanna DeGroot of Hackensack Township (in which this farm was located) conveyed by deed of 26 March 1844 to Samuel E. DeGroot of same place for \$100.00 "all that tract.....being the homestead farm in the English Neighborhood whereon I now dwell and which was devised to me by the last will of my late father, John Day". The grantee, with wife, Sarah C. DeGroot, being of the Borough of Ridgefield, gave deed of 17 May 1894 conveying the same property to Samuel G. H. Wright of the same place, and the last named passed it to Leila M. Wright of the said Borough on 10 July 1902, who in turn passed title to Carrie L. Wright on 2 January 1915. The last named, a widow, gave deed of 2 August 1926 conveying the property to David Brown of Englewood, New Jersey, and Benjamin Klein of Edgewater, New Jersey, who passed it on to the Ebco, Rubin and Klein Realty Corporations on 6 October 1927 from whom the house and 1.37 acres of land passed to Maurice G. Gunn of Ridgefield by deed of 26 April 1928, the present owner, 1940.

The design and details of this notable example of the highest development of the so-called Dutch Colonial domestic architecture which is native to Bergen County, indicate its erection in the early part of the 19th century. The formality of central unit flanked by symmetrical wings is evidence of that dating, as also are the carefully coursed masonry of the walls and the imposing entrance doorway with its leaded glass transom and side lights. The well designed treatment at the end of the central hall, a composition of arched entrance to the rear exit door between identical doorways having also glass transoms, is definitely of the period stated. In the woodwork trim of the passage doors the square blocks in the upper corners likewise testify to this date. Remarkable is the unusual treatment of the mantel in the living room, whose sunburst ornamented cut-outs applied in the freize appear similarly in the head of the main entrance doorway. In the latter feature, the door itself, with its iron grillework is obviously a replacement of the original.

This house is admirably maintained in practically original condition although the dormer windows and large studio windows inserted to light the garret story are modern as are the frame additions to the wings made for convenience.

Of this house, it is stated in Van Valen's History of Bergen County, p. 538, that "John DeGroot married Johannah Day and settled on a tract of land which has ever since been the DeGroot Homestead".

Bibliography:

A search of title in land and probate records of Bergen County by Joseph Benenati, H.A.B.S. abstractor, January 1940

Lewis D. Cook
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Approved:

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